


News Release

Twenty Years for UMC Teambackers

By Itollefs on Monday, August 6, 2012

It began in 1993 when the University of Minnesota, Crookston transitioned from a two-year technical college to a four-year baccalaureate degree granting institution. Then director of athletics Marv Bachmeier and director of external relations Al Larson recognized the need for an organization to help raise money for athletic scholarships. The two brainstormed a number of times before a committee was formed, including members of both the campus and community, and through that committee, UMC Teambackers was born. As a two-year institution, scholarships were not offered to student-athletes as determined by a decision of the conference, but that all changed when the four-year transition took place. This change made fundraising for scholarships both an opportunity and a challenge for the campus, and Bachmeier and Larson felt the importance for both the student-athletes and the athletic program.





"We had a lot of obligations with our own roles on campus, but we also knew we had to find a way to provide scholarships for our athletes," Bachmeier said. "Al and I understood the significance, and we looked at what others were doing and engaged people on campus and in the community who could help provide leadership." After 18 years as an athletic trainer, Bill Tyrrell took over as director of athletic fundraising in 2005 and works closely with Teambackers. "For a number of students, excelling in sport is the door to a college education," Tyrrell said. "It is our goal to help those students continue to compete in the sport they love and to succeed academically. We appreciate every Teambacker member for their support and the difference they make in the lives of our student-athletes." Over the years, Teambackers has investigated and held a number of fundraising events, but the two that have been around the longest are the Teambacker golf tournaments and Fun Nite, an evening of food, games, and auctions held annually in April. Since its humble beginnings, the organization has raised some \$2 million dollars. "The role of Teambackers is vital to our campus," Tyrrell continues. "Our athletic programs need the financial contributions of individuals and organizations to help our student-athletes be successful in their sport as well as in the classroom. Anyone interested in Teambackers should contact me." To mark their 20th year Teambackers is planning a number of anniversary events. They will kick off the start of their 20-year celebration on Thursday, August 23, when members and their guests will have an opportunity to meet Chancellor Fred Wood and Golden Eagle student-athletes during a special event designed to honor the history of UMC Teambackers. The mission of Teambackers today remains essentially unchanged from those early years. It continues to promote athletics and to raise money for scholarships and works in conjunction with the UMC Development Office, the Athletic Department, and the University of Minnesota Foundation. UMC is a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II and a member of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference. To learn more, visit [www.goldeneaglesports.com/teambackers](http://www.goldeneaglesports.com/teambackers). Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers 26 bachelor's degree programs, 18 minors, and 36 concentrations, including 10 online degrees, in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,600 undergraduates from 25 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit [www.umcrookston.edu](http://www.umcrookston.edu).

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